



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Ruth Coleman, Director

Inland Empire District
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MOUNTAINS RECREATION
MAY 21 2005

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A CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY - May 25, 2005

A CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY - MALIBU

Tony Rahimian
RMC, Inc.
17801 Cartwright Road
Irvine, CA 92614

Re: Riverside to Orange County Connection – Draft Conceptual Alternatives Report

Dear Mr. Rahimian:

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Conceptual Alternatives Report (DCAR). As we move toward more precise alignments, we expect to provide additional data that will assist in evaluating potential alternatives. We are committed to working with you to develop mutually acceptable solutions.

In regards to the DCAR, we maintain our position that any alignment jeopardizing the long-term sustainability of Chino Hills State Park is not an environmentally superior alternative. We recognize that the current trend is to shift the location of the Prado Expressway to the shoulder of SR-91, essentially widening SR-91. In this alignment, the Prado Expressway, also called Corridor A, would appear to require State Parks right-of-way and also make areas within Chino Hills State SP and the entire Puente-Chino Hills wildlife corridor vulnerable to negative impacts. In addition, given the multitude of resource and public works constraints identified since the inception of this Major Investment Study, we suggest removing the Prado Expressway from further consideration.

As shown under Section S.7, it appears Corridor A is a component of the all possible solutions. While it is difficult to determine the exact impact at this point, potential solutions such as this which apply new pressures on existing State Parks land are viewed as unacceptable. We further suggest that statements such as these be removed until assurances can be made that State Parks land will not be required for alignments within these alternatives.

We appreciate including elevated and reversible lanes within the potential options. One or both of these options may help reduce the need for additional infrastructure improvements. For example, Option Nos. 91-4 and 91-14 may be combined to obtain an ADT of 160,000. Additionally, Option No. 91-14, an elevated four lane structure shows an ADT of 80,000, while Option No. 91-13, an addition of three general purpose lanes in each direction shows an ADT of 120,000. We request expanding options such as 91-14 to show the maximum potential ADT.

We remain opposed to options such as 91-2, 91-6, A-3, A-4, A-5 and A-6 which may require State Parks right-of-way. In addition, the narratives for Corridor A on Pages 35-36

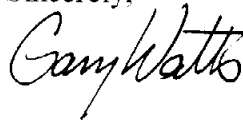
should be amended to reflect that significant environmental impacts would result from Option Nos. A-2 through A-6.

Under Section 2.1.1, please clarify the second paragraph which indicates that SR-91 "is congested both eastbound and westbound for much of the day..." Table 2.1 illustrates the opposite by showing Level of Service B for AM eastbound and PM westbound.

Please amend language in the Introduction and elsewhere to reflect that job growth in Orange County will not grow proportionally with the population growth in Riverside County.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to be a part of this effort. If you have any questions, please contact Enrique Arroyo, at (951) 940-5664.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Watts". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Watts" clearly distinguishable.

Gary Watts
District Superintendent

cc: Rick Rayburn, State Parks
Kathy Weatherman, State Parks
Jonathon Snyder, USFWS
Mike Shulz, EPA
Pam Beare, CDFG
Susan Meyer, ACOE
Mark Adelson, RWQCB
Judi Tamasi, WCCA
Jeff Yann, Sierra Club
Claire Schlotterbeck, Hills For Everyone
K. Seigel, Center for Biological Diversity
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Cathy Bechtel, RCTC